"Let him rest, today," the healer was saying. "Tomorrow he can resume light duties, but I advise you not to take him to bed until the torn muscles have had a chance to heal."

"As you advise," came the remembered deep voice.

For a time there was silence, then he heard movement in the tent and opened his eyes reluctantly wondering what was going to happen now. One of the general slaves, the man who had told him how to serve Spock's food, now brought a tray to the table beside the couch. Spock moved into view and indicated the tray.

"The healer says you must eat. You are also permitted wine. You have lost much blood."

Kirk ate obediently, aware that his master was watching him critically; when he had finished the slave was called back to remove the tray, and Spock seated himself at the foot of the couch.

"Tell me how you came by your injuries," he commanded, and Kirk felt the shamed blood rise in his face.

"I was told...that I was a slave, that I must obey," he began hesitantly. "I was going to try. I knew there was no escape, and one of the slavers said that sometimes, on Vulcan, a slave who had proved his worth was allowed to---to hold a certain measure of responsibility. In my own world I served in the Security forces. I thought--in a world of warriors--perhaps I could...."

"Go on," Spock prompted as the slave's voice faded.

"What they didn't tell me was that I'd be sold as--as-- Sex between men is wrong, shameful! When Lord Savak told me what he expected, I refused. He--he..."

"Slave, do you understand what you are saying?" Spock's tone was stern. "You claim that a Vulcan--a warrior of Vulcan--is responsible for your condition? I think it much more likely that your fellow slaves have abused you."

"No! It was Savak! He and his friends."

Rising, Spock paced the tent, frowning in indecision. He was still convinced that the Human was lying, but it would be as well to demonstrate to the youth that deceit was useless with Vulcans. However he had come by his injuries, the memory was obviously painful and humiliating, but that could be no excuse. A demonstration of power now would not only give him the truth about Kirk's condition, but preclude any repetition in the future. His decision made, Spock returned to the couch and sat down, taking the Human's face between his hands.

"James, I will see your mind. The truth of the assault you suffered. You will hide nothing. You will be unable to lie."

"I'm not lying, please--" Kirk shrank back, coloring fiercely. Spock, believing the Human's reluctance to be an acknowledgement that he had lied, became even more determined. Holding the struggling body easily in one arm, he touched his fingers to Kirk's sweating face and probed the terrified mind for the memory he sought. Kirk fought like a cornered le-matya, but he was no match for the Vulcan physically, and although his mind was surprisingly strong, he had not the least idea how to resist. Spock reached deep into the exposed mind, commanding 'Think of the attack, remember in detail, remember how it was.' In response the Human's mind shuddered but obeyed; the layers of self-protection parted, and the scene began to unreel for the watching Vulcan.

Hands still tied in front of him, he stood inside a tent richly furnished with wild animal skins and strange, barbaric weapons. The Vulcan, Savak, he had been told was now his owner, lounged on a pillow-strewn bed, looking him up and down. The Vulcan's robe was open, exposing his long heavy penis. It was greenish and two ridges, not one, set off the head. Devil ears, devil eyes, and a devil's sex, too, thought Kirk. Savak fondled it as he explained to Kirk the true nature of the service expected from him, obviously enjoying the slave's horror and revulsion.

He could not...just the thought of it made him sick. He bit his lip and managed to shake his head.

"You may not refuse me...slave." He saw how the word rankled. The green penis was erect now between the stroking fingers. Savak smiled unpleasantly. "Come here."

"No...I won't...I can't..." Kirk paused, pulled himself together. "Set me some other duty, and I'll do it...but this...it's wrong."

"On your world, perhaps," Savak shrugged. "Here your body is the only thing of value you have."

Moving with a speed Kirk did not expect, Savak rose from the bed and caught Kirk in his arms. First Kirk tensed, then he tried to pull away.

"Fight me if you will," Savak mocked. "You will submit in the end--you will have no choice."

The Vulcan bent to kiss him and Kirk brought his knee up, aiming for the soft scrotum. Not in position, the blow was quickly deflected from its target. Savak slapped him, knocking him across the tent, then came after him again.

Kirk's resistence was fierce, desperate, and futile from the beginning. He fought long enough to exhaust himself, long enough to infuriate Savak, and long enough to know it was hopeless. With his hands tied, he had only his feet and arms as weapons. His strength was not recovered from the long space journey, his body not accustomed to the Vulcan heat and gravity. He was a trained fighter, but so was Savak, and the Vulcan was stronger. His bones felt like iron even to Kirk's kicks. Useless as it was, he fought on. His pride and fear would not let him quit.

Finally, panting, sweat dripping in his eyes, he stumbled. Savak caught him, crushing him to his chest, squeezing the breath from his body. Hard fingers twined in his hair and jerked his head back sharply, so that he gasped at the sudden pain. Savak bent to take his open mouth in a bruising kiss, the hot tongue thrusting deep, suffocating him. Kirk struggled, desperate for air, the tent spinning in dizzy circles as he began to black out.

Suddenly released, he was thrown across the bed. Savak crouched over him, ripping the tunic from his body, the coarse fabric leaving stinging cloth burns on his skin. Kirk struggled to get his balance on the bed, but Savak lifted his hips, wrenched his legs apart and thrust into him. Kirk screamed, trying to free himself. Snarling, Savak shoved his face deep into the pillows, holding